

Child Welfare Services Branch	HAWAII DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES POLICY ANNOUNCEMENT	
	Policy No: PA 2005-1	Issuance Date: 4/29/05
	Subject: OHANA CONFERENCES	

POLICY DIRECTIVE

The 2003 Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) validates the proven effectiveness of Ohana Conference as a model to engage and involve families and all parties in developing case plans to address safety and risk concerns and transition services for families, children and youth active in our Child Welfare Services (CWS) Branch.

Effective immediately, ALL requests for Ohana Conferences made by any active party, including but not limited to CWS social workers, biological parents, foster parents, guardians-ad-litem, or parents' attorney, in an active CWS case, SHALL be honored and scheduled to begin as soon as possible.

This is not a directive to convene Ohana Conferences on all active CWS cases but a mandate to provide direct access to Ohana Conferences when requested by any active party in an active CWS case. This is to empower families to develop their own plan and to ensure direct access to Ohana Conferences at the front end, prior to reunification and case closure, and for youth transitioning from foster care.

Participation is to be INCLUSIVE and to include maternal and paternal family members, foster parents, relatives, advocates, family friends, neighbors, school officials, therapists, and anyone who may be able to assist in addressing the child's safety and risk factors or transition planning for children.

For sex abuse cases, Ohana Conferences will be convened for the purpose of placement and transition planning for the child victims.